

# Headlight



Written by the students of Marblehead High School for our school and community

2017-2018 Issue

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## Massachusetts Prepares for Influx of Puerto Ricans

Jillian Lederman, Sophomore Reporter

Puerto Rico, after suffering two devastating hurricanes, is almost entirely obliterated. Some parts of the island will be without electricity for months, and for a vast majority of the population, food and water are scarce. As a result, many Puerto Rican citizens are searching for a way to leave the island and travel to friends or family in areas of the mainland United States.

In *Balzac vs. People of Porto Rico*, the Supreme Court unanimously ruled that Puerto Ricans have the ability to become "residents of any State there to enjoy every right of any other citizen of the United States, civil, social and political." As citizens of the island are likewise citizens of the United States, they have the constitutional right to travel. However, not only does the potential mass emigration from Puerto Rico pose major problems for the island itself, but the mainland United States must also prepare to support the throngs of new arrivals, many of whom are without money, housing, or health care.

Massachusetts has the fifth largest population of Puerto Ricans of any state in the U.S. Provided that Puerto Ricans are able to escape from their land, this ranking could very likely increase. Already, in areas of Western Massachusetts such as Springfield and Holyoke, the Puerto Rican population is growing. Schools in the state are preparing for the expected incursion of students from the destroyed island.

Immediately following the arrival of Hurricane Maria on September 20, 2017, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education alerted school district leaders to the likelihood of large groups of new students. Massachusetts schools are prepared to welcome the students. However, these children will have little information about their education, including their grades and the information that they have already covered. Therefore, schools must figure out how to sort the students into appropriate and suitable programs.

The federal McKinney-Vento Act requires that school districts must accommodate homeless children (children staying at a relative or friend's home rather than their own) regardless of whether or not they have documentation verifying their age or grade. To prepare for new groups of Puerto Rican students, schools must act quickly. In addition to placing the students in the correct classes, school officials must connect them with free meals and help them move past the inevitable language barrier. This will likely include adding resources to English language learner programs. Schools may not have the resources they need to quickly and effectively accommodate the new influx of foreign students. However, non-profit organizations are reacting as well. The Massachusetts United for Puerto Rico Fund has raised over 1.3 million dollars in donations, some of which will support Puerto Rican families moving to Massachusetts. This will help the families obtain housing, medical care, and education, along with lessening the burden on Massachusetts schools. In the months ahead, the state of Massachusetts will be working quickly in order to help former inhabitants of Puerto Rico.

## American Protest Music

Paul Heffernan, Junior Reporter

"We just want to take the chains off. We just want to be free." These are the first lines of J. Cole's song "Be Free," written in response to Michael Brown's death at the hands of police. It was the first song to directly address the incident, and is a pure example of how powerful a protest song can be. Throughout most of human existence, people have been unable to listen to prerecorded music. They were forced to attend small performances or concerts to hear their music.

Everyone likes to listen to music; it's universal. Some artists, such as American folksinger Woody Guthrie, realized that music was the perfect way to communicate an opinion or raise awareness about a current issue. Today this is known as the protest song. Protest songs are often written with catchy and simple melodies so the audience can sing along and remember them easily. This allows people from various backgrounds to unite for a single cause. Protest music has played a tremendous role in promoting social and political change throughout American history. From Woody Guthrie's topical songs of the 1920s, to the lyrics that are heard today in hip-hop, protest music has been a driving force for change in America.

Since the birth of hip-hop in the 1970s, the genre has always been a platform to express frustration and protest against institutions. For example, Public Enemy's "Fight the Power" in 1988 challenged any and all authorities. "F\*\*\* The Police" from NWA, however, was more straightforward with its lyrics. "Self Destruction" released in 1989, featuring MC Lyte, Kool Moe Dee, the late Heavy D, and D Nice, is a great example of positive protest music. In the song, they each rap about how the rise of crimes committed by blacks on blacks is a result of violence erupting from gang tensions.

Over the years, the art of the protest song has not been lost; it has simply evolved with the times. Right now, the main platform for protest music is hip-hop. So, the next time you listen to a hip-hop song, pay attention to the lyrics. You may be able to see how music today impacts our culture for better, and for worse.

## Quote of the Week

*"No one person is born hating another person because of the color of his skin, or his background, or his religion. People must learn to hate, and if they can learn to hate, they can be taught to love, for love comes more naturally to the human heart than its opposite."* - Nelson Mandela

## You, the Beauty of Earth

Clara Rapoport, Freshman Reporter

You are beautiful  
You are the Earth's other half  
You are mysterious and beautiful

Not much is known about you  
You are indeed quite deep, your past has meaning  
The colors you wear are a catch to the eye  
The beings and things you hold are mystical

You're upset now, and when you're upset you react  
Going back and forth, and back and forth  
Rocking your anger and sadness

People don't treat you well nowadays  
People throw all of their crap at you  
It gives you tough days, tough weeks, or even tough months

But I respect you, even if no one else does  
Thank you for being here, helping us all  
For being the ocean that you are

## Building Bridges to Boston and Back

Sophie Hauck, Freshman Reporter

The METCO program is a staple in the Marblehead Public School System, one that has lasted, as of this school calendar, for 50 years. Along with this momentous occasion comes a new director, Jessica Castro, a METCO parent who has served Boston neighborhoods for over ten years through various community outreach roles.

Castro has big ambitions for her work in Marblehead, including exposing Marblehead to the Boston side of the METCO program, fostering mentorships between the middle and high school METCO students, and breaking down the barriers between the commuting and noncommuting students of Marblehead. It is clear that although Castro just began her position, she is eager to create a positive impact.

Many students do not understand the daily routine of a METCO student. In order to get to school, commuting students will wake up before 5:00 a.m. to get to the bus, then spending over an hour traveling to Marblehead. In fact, Marblehead is the furthest district for METCO. "The brunt of their day they're in transportation," tells Castro. With this in mind, she emphasizes the importance of being understanding. "Have some empathy," she says. Although new to the job, Castro already has immense respect for her students. "Their day is difficult, I guess the great thing about them is that they're resilient. Not everyone can do that so I'm proud of them for being able to have that commitment."

As for the potential mentor program, Castro explains the idea's origin. "There seems to be a disconnect between the younger students and the older students... Why is that disconnect happening and how do we support them coming into the high school?" Castro attributes the idea to the METCO PCO, a group of METCO parents who collaborate to make the program's events outside of school a success.

Castro admits that work that can be done to improve the relationship between Marblehead and the METCO program, "I want to see more of a partnership and things to just be more free-flowing," she says. "We speak of them as METCO students but...how do (we), even myself, get away from just saying no they're MHD students, but they're commuting versus non-commuting."

Along with this, Castro wants the Boston aspect of the program to be more visible to the Marblehead community. "I want bridges from Boston to Marblehead and Marblehead back to Boston," she says. "It's important for Marblehead to understand Boston families and... the city, just as it's important for the METCO students to understand the Marblehead community." Despite these potential improvements, Castro stresses the significance of the Marblehead-Boston partnership. "I think without (it), it would be a disservice to both sides. For Boston students coming in, it's teaching them to be resilient at a very early age." Castro also mentions the benefits for Marblehead, "It provides diversity... it provides a different way of seeing things," she says. "Boston students and Marblehead students are two different students. What do we bring to each other so that we can be okay with each other?"

If students or community members ever have a question about the program, don't be afraid to ask. "If people don't know, they just don't know," she says, "We have to be okay with that." And although Castro is the METCO director, she emphasizes her role in educating the community. "I'm here to help educate parents, students, and faculty around everything that needs to happen," she says.

The Marblehead community looks forward to seeing the positive impact of Jessica Castro, as well as to helping her build bridges to Boston and back.

## Blood Drive

The National Honors Society at Marblehead High School will be running this year's blood drive on:

**Wednesday, October 25th, from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.**  
Students can sign up to donate throughout the school day.

Every three seconds someone needs blood. Without blood transfusions, over four million Americans would die every year. **Do you want to save lives?**

**Please consider donating!**

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